SOME THOUGHTS

UPON

A BILL

FOR

GENERAL NATURALIZATION:

Addreſſed to THOSE of all Denominations who act upon

WHIG-PRINCIPLES.

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Some THOUGHTS upon a BILL for GENERAL NATURALIZATION, &c.

THIS Addreſs in Favour of Man, is not meant to be conſin'd to any Party of Men. Whig-Principles are Principles of Reaſon, of Liberty, of univerſal Benevolence, unclouded by Ignorance, unwarp'd by Error, unnarrow'd and unreſtrain'd by local Prejudices. They are the Principles of rational Beings acting as *ſuch*; and if *ſuch* are to be reduced into any Specifick Claſs, it can only be in Contra-Diſtinction to others, who with the Figure and Form of Man fall back into the Maſs of Animal Entity; ſome into the mute and obedient Flocks and Herds; others into the more ſavage and untamed, as led or driven by various Inſtinct, Temper and Complexion.

Sociability, in an imperfect Senſe of the Word, is not peculiar to *Man*. It is to be found in all Individuals of whatever Species: The Bear and the Ox have their Friends and Societies; but their Friendſhips and Aſſociations are confined to Thoſe who are Inhabitants of the ſame Foreſts and Fields; a Stranger is an Enemy, becauſe He is a Stranger. They act from Inſtinct, but They act from Inſtinct only.

The ſame Spring moves the human Boſom, but tempered with Humanity, and directed by Reaſon, it only ſerves to prompt the Rational and the Humane, to exert Benevolence upon Thoſe who are neareſt the Reach of Bounty and of Aſſiſtance.

The native Soil will ever be deareſt to the beſt and the wiſeſt Men; but far from rejecting the Stranger who quits his own Country for theirs, They will cheriſh him for the Preference, and love him for a Conformity of Affection. This Sameneſs of Affection, of Diſpoſition and of Manners, which characteriſes the different Nations, as it varies in different Countries, could alone have determined his Choice, and the Naturalized Foreigner muſt have been ſtamp'd a *Briton* by Nature, before he becomes one by Law.

The meer Animal, could he reaſon, might conſider the Stranger as an Uſurper of his Rights, and a Devourer of his Food; for he neither increaſes by Induſtry that Food which he conſumes, nor ſtrengthens their Empire whoſe Territory he inhabits: He comes an Invader, and brings the ſame unſocial or hoſtile Spirit with which he is receiv'd.

But Man propagates thoſe Fruits upon which he feeds, multiplies thoſe Bleſſings which he partakes, ſupports and defends thoſe Rights for others which he enjoys in common with them; and They who exclude *ſuch*, act upon Principles more oppoſite to Reaſon, than that Inſtinct which directs the unarguing Brute.

Capacious Minds and inlarged Hearts will entertain ſuitable Notions and Sentiments; They will ſee and purſue great Intereſts, and in the Purſuit be ſuperior to little Difficulties, to little Prejudices, and to falſe or futile Objections. While narrow Minds and contracted Hearts, whether ſuiting their Sentiments to their Conceptions, or their Conceptions to their Sentiments, will prefer little Motives to great ones, becauſe They can feel no others; little Objects to great ones, becauſe They can comprehend no others; Themſelves to their Pariſh, their Pariſh to the Nation; and in their Choice moſt often bring Prejudice to that which They would prefer.

From ſuch Cauſes narrow Notions in Religion, narrow Notions in Trade, narrow Notions in Policy are derived; and Perſecutions, Monopolies, and Excluſion of Foreigners flow from the ſame Tenets, religious, commercial, and political.

The fiery Zealot burns the Heretick for Doctrines harmleſs to him and to Society; the all-graſping Monopoliſt, like thoſe obſcene Swarms ſent to execute Divine Vengeance upon a guilty Land, blaſts the Fruits which he cannot devour; the unſocial Native ſhuts out the Foreigner from thoſe Waſtes which he cannot cultivate. All are actuated alike by the ſame Spirit, and in thoſe wretched Countries where all alike prevail, their Foot-ſteps are marked in Ignorance, Miſery and Deſolation.

Such would now be the Condition of this Country, for in this Country all three prevailed, had not Providence worked our Deliverance from religious and civil Tyranny, and the Hand of Authority, directed by Wiſdom, freed the Courſe of fortunate Events from the otherwiſe inſuperable Obſtructions of ill underſtood Laws.

Some Traces however, and thoſe not ſlight ones, ſtill remain of, at leaſt, two of theſe Evils. There is a Species of Laws now ſubſiſting in our Statute-Books, which beginning with the Reign of King *Richard the Second*, and multiplying through many ſucceeding Reigns, is a permanent Diſgrace upon every Period through which they have paſſed, breathing the ſame ſelfiſh, abſurd, and unſocial Jealouſy: Nor are the parochial Politicks leſs juſt, leſs noble, and leſs inlightned, which baniſh the Neighbour as a Foreigner; than thoſe National Prejudices which exclude the *Swiſs*, the *German*, or the *Dutch*, from the Privileges of *Britons*, who would purchaſe thoſe Privileges with their Subſtance and their Induſtry.

A Limitation of Numbers is an univerſal Monopoly, extending to every Branch of Trade and Manufacture, ſtinting the Number of the Employ'd, and of Thoſe who employ them, of Thoſe who earn, and of Thoſe who conſume.

The Weight of Taxes, great as they now are, may poſſibly be born by Numbers. Multiplicity of ſpacious Harbours, Felicity of Situation, Fertility of Soil, Goodneſs of Produce, and, above all, Liberty and Freedom of Government, give us Advantages improved by ſuperior Skill, which might be ſufficient to ſupply the numerous Drains now iſſuing from us.

But this univerſal Monopoly counteracts the Deſigns of Nature, by intercepting their Effects: It contracts our Harbours, for it reduces our Shipping; it removes us to a greater Diſtance from other Commercial Nations, for it cauſes ſlow Returns; it impoveriſhes our Harveſts, for it thins our Markets; it leſſens the Bleſſings of free Government, for it reſtrains its Operation; and it ſhuts out ſuperior Excellence, for it excludes Emulation.

That all Trade in its Riſe and in its Progreſs proceeds from Numbers, is as certain as that mutual Wants, mutual Aſſiſtances, and the Means of ſupplying thoſe Wants, and of affording theſe Aſſiſtances, Strength, Labour, Invention and Knowledge, are all multiplied by Numbers; that the Work of one ſupplies the Neceſſities of many, and that when by the Earnings of the Young, the Active, the Healthy, and the Vigorous, above their own Conſumption, and that of the Old, the Lazy, the Infirm and Weak, the Home-Market overflows, ſuch Superfluity becomes the Material of foreign Commerce.

To this Cauſe is owing our Superiority over other Countries, and to this Cauſe is owing the dangerous Superiority which one Country has over us; we know the Cauſe, and we apprehend the Danger, but we reject the only Means of removing the Inequality, and of averting its Effects.

Eighteen Millions of People will ever be an over Match for ten Millions, and their natural Increaſe will every Day make the Odds ſtill greater. We have one Advantage by which to draw thoſe Multitudes which we cannot produce, and to even theſe Odds; we have Liberty, we have Freedom for Perſons, we have Security for Property, we have the beſt Form of Government that ever ſubſiſted ſince Civil Societies were firſt inſtituted; but we have narrow Jealouſies; we have National Pride in its worſe Senſe; we have National Prejudices, and National Hatreds; we would incloſe ourſelves within our Political Pale, as the only Predeſtin'd, and ſhut out the Nations of the World as reproved and rejected Sectaries; we want at leaſt eight Millions more of People, to be upon an Equality with *France*; we have vacant Space ſufficient for that Number; but far from endeavouring to fill up the Void and ſupply the Neceſſity, we even lay Reſtraints upon a large Portion of Thoſe we have, as if, in theſe Circumſtances, to prevent an Increaſe of Numbers, and to render uſeleſs as many as we can of our preſent Inhabitants, were fundamental Maxims of *Britiſh* Policy.

This Policy, in Conjunction with other Cauſes, has ſo fatally operated, that after many conjectural Proofs of our Numbers having decreaſed for upward of one Hundred Years laſt paſt, a Calculation, founded upon the beſt Authority, has been lately produced by a learned Prelate, which makes the Inhabitants of our great Metropolis leſs, in the Year 1750, by 162,084 People, than in the Year 1733. But whatever the Cauſes of this amazing Decreaſe may be, whatever Remedies may be called for to ſtop the Evil in its further Progreſs, a Supply from other Countries is the only preſent Means of recruiting the Havock made by War and by Spirituous Liquors, and of replacing *Men* with *Men*.

If the Love of Liberty and Security be ſuch, as to tempt *many* to purchaſe thoſe Privileges, which ſhould be common to all who breath the ſame Air, and ſubmit themſelves to the ſame Laws; if many had rather be Sojourners with Thoſe who deſpiſe them, or ſend their Subſtance into a Country which rejects their Perſons, than ſubject either to Perſecution and Violence at Home; how muſt our Strength and Wealth have been now increaſed, and how would they ſtill increaſe, were the ſeparating Barriers thrown open to the Univerſe, to the Crowds driven by the Frenzy of civil and religious Tyranny! what the Effect of theſe muſt be, may be gathered from a Compariſon of what we now are with former Ages, through the ſeveral Periods in which *Venice*, *Florence*, *Lombardy*, *Dantzick*, *Lubeck*, *Hamburgh*, *Bruges*, and *Antwerp*, carried the whole Trade of *Europe*; until Perſecution and Oppreſſion compelled Numbers to ſeek for Shelter among us.

Through the preſent Impotence of *Spaniſh* Cruelty, and the Prevalency of a better Policy in *France*, ſuch Migrations may never again be produced as happened in the two laſt Centuries; but were the Paſſage left free and open to the Oppreſſed of all Countries where there are Oppreſſors, although a Torrent might not at once guſh thro', a deep, a wide, though poſſibly a ſilent Stream would never ceaſe to flow, from the inexhauſtible Source of Pride and Ignorance; and a Flood thus compoſed of congregated Waters from various Soils, would be ſtill more fruitful of new and various Produce.

The *Fortunate* gain by the Misfortunes, and the *Wiſe* by the Folly of others; and They whoſe Wiſdom makes Preparation for the Events produced by theſe Cauſes, need no other Fund in which to truſt their Hopes and Induſtry. E'er this be further neglected, for it has already been too long neglected, let us look around us, let us conſider who may be our Enemies, and who can be our Friends! broken Syſtems, diſcordant Intereſts, defeated Enterprizes on the one Side, againſt ſolid and united Power, ſteady Views, and Superiority demonſtrated by Succeſs on the other. Let recent Trials leave ſuitable Impreſſions behind them! let not theſe be the only Conſequences that do not remain! Theſe may be ſalutary, and may hereafter prevent worſe Miſchiefs.

The common Objection to all Attempts of Naturalizing Foreigners, that it would bring the uſeleſs *Outcaſts* of other Countries among us, is falſe and trifling. Who fly from Oppreſſion, but the Lovers of Liberty? Who travel for Gain or Improvement, but the Active, the Strong, and the Induſtrious? Who would be allured by the Benefits of Naturalization, but thoſe who have Means to entitle them to thoſe Benefits? And does Naturalization confer any one Advantage which muſt not be earned by a Year's Service as a hired Servant in *Britain*, or by Wealth ſufficient to purchaſe a Houſe or Lands within this Realm? Without either of theſe, Naturalization gains no Settlement;

and without a Settlement, no Pariſh is obliged to give any Aſſiſtance to the *Naturalized* Foreigner, which the *Unnaturalized* is not already *entitled* to by *Law*. *But* why, if the Lumber of Mankind were only to take Advantage of Naturalization, why do not thoſe under that Prædicament, the Lazy, the Starving, the Aged, the Sickly, the Lame and the Blind quit the Mountains of *Scotland* and the Bogs of *Ireland* to crowd our Streets? They are Naturalized by Birth, and are a Part of us. Will it be ſaid that They may be removed by Law, as They have a known Home within theſe Realms? But is this Law executed in *many* Inſtances? Is it ever executed, with reſpect to Thoſe diſtant People, near the great Capital, or towards the Center of the Nation, where Wealth and Affluence would be moſt apt to allure Them? Is the Law known to Them, and are They deterr'd by it? or, are not Lazineſs, Poverty, Sickneſs, Age and Imbecillity Impediments ſufficiently ſtrong againſt travelling into ſtrange Countries, and burſting the Bands of Kindred, Acquaintance, Home-Affections, and Society in Miſery? Theſe, ever moſt prevalent on the weakeſt and moſt wretched, make them chooſe to ſtarve in Herds, rather than wander far from Home, ſeparate and diſperſed, for a Livelihood.

Such inſurmountable Difficulties in the way of Thoſe who alone can be a Burden upon any Country where They ſettle, give one Advantage to Naturalized Numbers over a like Proportion of Native Inhabitants. They give the *uſeful*, clear from the promiſcuous Maſs; the Droſs is left behind, and Induſtry is brought intire, freed of the Deductions in the common Courſe of Increaſe from the *Able* to the *Impotent*. The ſame Spirit which prompts Foreigners to come, will excite Them to ſtruggle with many Diſadvantages under which they muſt labour. Neceſſity will compel Them to work more or upon harder Terms than the Natives; the ſame Neceſſity, animated by Emulation, will induce Them to excel, until that Neceſſity and that Spirit diffuſing itſelf through all Denominations, will from the Endeavours of Individuals to ſurpaſs one the other, end in a general Excellence; and enable the Nation to out-work and underſell Thoſe who have already beat us out of ſome of the beſt Markets in *Europe*, in ſome of the moſt profitable Branches of Commerce, and are every Day making farther Advances upon us.

In this Situation, the fair State of the Queſtion is, Whether we ſhall endeavour to preſerve what we have, and recover what we have loſt, by the Aſſiſtance of Foreign Individuals, or ſuffer what yet remains to depart from us to Foreign Nations; whether we ſhall inrich the *German* or the *Swiſs* who becomes one of us, or ſuffer 18 Millions of *Frenchmen* to inrich themſelves at the Expence of our Miſery and Decay. Would we always connect theſe Ideas, inſeparably connected in Reaſon and Nature; would we conſider the whole Argument intire, and not in its Parts, the Queſtion would be eaſily decided. The

The vulgar Objection, that Foreigners thus admitted will eat the Bread of *Engliſhmen*, can only be an Argument in Favour of Thoſe who would continue to eat the Bread of Idleneſs; and ſurely none can be ſo abſurdly National, as to prefer *Engliſh* Lazineſs to Foreign Induſtry. Or if They ſhould, let Them conſider the Preference cannot reſt there; that Lazineſs muſt be paid for by *Engliſhmen*, and the whole Nation muſt be taxed at the Will and Pleaſure of the indolent Monopoliſt. But if the Word *Foreigner* ſtill alarms the true-born *Engliſhman*, one Generation will abſorb even that imaginary Diſtinction. The *Engliſh* Son will be called what the Father really was, an *Engliſhman*; and will poſſibly in his Turn bear Teſtimony to the Place of his Birth, by his Hatred to Foreigners.

Whatever ſpecious Arguments may be uſed, whatever Miſts Sophiſtry and Prejudice may throw over Truth, contrary to repeated Experience, in a Country peopled, inrich'd and ſaved by Foreigners; yet it remains inconteſtable by Reaſon, that whether we conſider Poors Rates, Taxes or Trade, what is gained to the Nation, or what is paid for Government and the Support of our Poor, an Increaſe of Numbers would add to the general Stock, while it lightened each particular Burden by dividing and ſharing the Weight.

But the ſame Ignorance of Law-Givers, to which all other Monopolies are owing, poſſibly continues this. The Laws for the Maintenance of our Poor are imperfect; They were meant to relieve the Wants of Old-Age and Infirmity, and They create thoſe Wants, by incouraging Lazineſs and Diſſipation. Conſtant Abuſes happen; every Body feels them, every Body complains. But we are too proud to learn from our Neighbours, and we are too unwiſe to inſtitute any thing effectual of our own. Fear is an Attendant upon Ignorance, and we dread to increaſe our Numbers, leſt we ſhould multiply the Evil. Why then, upon the ſame Principles, are not Marriages forbid, until our Le—tors are better inſtructed? and in doing this by Law, we ſhould only do what many Squires in many Pariſhes attempt, by Virtue of their own Authority and their own Ignorance.

But if National Averſions be inſuperable by Truth evident through Reaſon and Experience; if the Example of others be not ſufficient to direct our Judgments, it may poſſibly prevail to inflame Emulation, and oppoſe *Britiſh* Generoſity to *Britiſh* Prejudices.

The popiſh Natives of *Ireland* are conſidered as natural-born Subjects in *Spain*; the *French* naturalize Thoſe of this Country in their Communion; they perſecute Proteſtants, the cruel Edicts of *Lewis the Fourteenth*'s Reign are renew'd and inforc'd by Royal Proclamations; ſome Wretches are already fled from their Fury into the neighbouring Iſlands of *Jerſey* and *Guernſey*; let us be leſs Cruel, but not leſs Charitable and Hoſpitable than They; nor refuſe to the perſecuted Proteſtant that Aſylum which They throw open to the unperſecuted Papiſt.

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